

PUGET SOUND LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Week of January 21, 2014

The Puget Sound Legislative Update highlights the issues related to our region's work to protect and restore the health of Puget Sound, Washington's greatest natural asset.

It's going to be a jam-packed 60 days! The 2014 Legislative Session started last week, and included Gov. Inslee's first State of the State address and several work sessions ranging from fish consumption rates and water quality standards to the Growth Management Act. In public hearing this week, we testified in support of legislation related to oil spill prevention, invasive species management, and forage fish data collection. Many more bills were introduced, and several will receive public hearings in the upcoming week.

Hot Topics

Supplemental Budget - The Governor's Supplemental Budget was heard in the Legislature this past week. Of concern to us is the budget's proposal to transfer funds from the toxics cleanup accounts into an education funding account. The transferred money would be replaced with new bond funding, but the sustainability of this budgeting approach is not addressed in the budget. The Partnership and many local governments, public ports, industry, and conservation organizations support fully funding the toxics account, which supports the toxics cleanup grant program.

Septic and Sewer Systems - House Bill 2186 and Senate Bill 5995 were recently introduced to allow cities to permit septic systems as a main source of sewage treatment within urban growth areas. Cities have an obligation under the Growth Management Act to provide sewer service in urban growth areas; existing rules already authorize septic system installation under certain circumstances. The proposed legislation would retain city authority to choose whether and when to require sewer hookup, but addresses affordability issues, defining as "cost prohibitive" sewer system hookups that are 15 percent higher than the cost of replacing an onsite septic system. The reality, however, is that connecting to sewers is not cheap, and the cost will most always exceed the threshold the bill establishes. *(continued on page 2)*

2014 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

- The 2014 Legislative Session is scheduled from Jan. 13 to March 13.
- Puget Sound Legislative Updates are posted at: http://www.psp.wa.gov/legislative_updates.php
- For up-to-date Legislative information, visit: www.leg.wa.gov
- Watch or listen to hearings and work sessions on: www.tvw.org
- Board members can participate in weekly coordination calls about issues in Olympia every Friday from 11:30 to Noon.
- Connect with PSP for breaking news and other events affecting Puget Sound on Twitter @PSPPartnership and Facebook: www.facebook.com/PugetSoundPartnership

Communication & Coordination:

If you are planning to meet with legislators or would like assistance with state legislative issues regarding Puget Sound priorities, please contact:

Michael Grayum

State and Local Government Relations Director, 360-628-1907

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The fact is that septic systems leak more and fail more than sewers, and they are not nearly as likely to be maintained. The consequence: polluted water in Puget Sound. Allowing more septic systems to be installed would increase the potential for contamination by human waste to adversely affect commercial and native shellfish resources. Negotiations on the bill continue. More to come.

Fish Barriers and GMO Salmon - On Friday, Jan. 17, the House Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee held a public hearing on House Bill 2251, sponsored by Rep. Wilcox regarding fish barrier removals. Many partners are working hard to address this important issue. As a result, Rep. Wilcox will likely propose alternative language in a revised bill. The Committee also heard testimony on House Bill 2143, which would prohibit the production of genetically engineered fish in state waters. The bill would also require labels on packages of genetically engineered fish offered for sale. Currently, there are no state or federal labeling requirements for genetically modified food. The U.S. Food & Drug Administration is expected to announce a decision on allowing the fish-farming of genetically modified salmon. The decision could set a precedent for approval of other genetically modified animals. The lawmakers did not take action on the bill Friday.

Oil Spill Prevention – We testified this past week in support of House Bill 2347, which enhances the safety of oil transportation. The bill requires the Department of Ecology to compile quarterly oil transportation reports, which incorporate information submitted by certain oil facilities; requires that oil tankers entering Grays Harbor and the Columbia River be escorted by at least one tug; authorizes Ecology to require two tug escorts, tanker-tug tethering, or other tug escort requirements for certain oil tankers entering Puget Sound, Grays Harbor, and the Columbia River; triples the natural resource damages assessed for oil spills in certain waters that involve an oil tug and barge found by Ecology to have acted recklessly or negligently; and directs the Office of Financial Management to conduct a study of the State's capacity to respond to oil train accidents. This legislation still needs to be fine-tuned, and we will work with our partners on this effort.

In the upcoming weeks, we will also share

- Findings from the recently completed Vessel Traffic Risk Assessment.
- Perspectives of the Oil Spill Work Group, which includes federal, local, tribal, environmental and industry representatives.

Session Cutoff Calendar

Legislation that fails to move past a cut-off deadline is usually considered “dead.”

- Feb. 7 - Last day to read in committee reports in house of origin, except fiscal and transportation committees.
- Feb. 11 - Last day to read in committee reports from fiscal and transportation committees in house of origin.
- Feb. 18 - Last day to consider bills in house of origin (5 p.m.).
- Feb. 28 - Last day to read in committee reports from opposite house, except fiscal and transportation committees.
- March 3 - Last day to read in opposite house committee reports from fiscal and transportation committees.
- March 7 - Last day to consider opposite house bills, except budgets and matters necessary to implement budgets.
- March 13 - Last day allowed for regular session under State Constitution.

Legislative Hearings & Work Sessions

Here's a quick list of bills that moved in committees this week. You can watch or listen to the hearings and work sessions at: www.tvw.org

(SB = Senate Bill; HB = House Bill)

Monday, Jan. 20

- SB **5995** - Concerning local government selection of the appropriate Sewer Systems as part of growth management. (*Senate Governmental Operations Committee*)
- HB **2218** - Concerning lake and beach management districts. (*House Local Government Committee*)

Tuesday, Jan. 21

- HB **2224** - Concerning the 2013-2015 Supplemental Capital Budget. (*House Capital Budget Committee*)
- HB **2262** - Concerning the use of science to support significant agency actions. (*House Environment Committee*)
- HB **2246** - Regarding financing for stewardship of mercury-containing lights. (*House Environment Committee*)
- SB **5990** - Concerning funding for programs under the environmental legacy stewardship program. (*Senate Energy, Environment & Telecommunications Committee*)
- SB **6040** - Concerning invasive species. (*Senate Natural Resources & Parks Committee*)
- SB **6072** - Providing for a biennial update on forage fish. (*Senate Natural Resources & Parks Committee*)

Wednesday, Jan. 22

- HB **2347** - Enhancing the safety of the transportation of oil. (*House Environment Committee*)
- HB **2440** - Modifying the definition of "oil" or "oils." (*House Environment Committee*)

Thursday, Jan. 23

- SB **6157** - Concerning a hazardous substance tax exemption for certain hazardous substances defined under RCW 82.21.020(1)(c) that are used as agricultural crop protection products and warehoused but not otherwise used, manufactured, packaged, or sold in this state. (*Senate Agriculture, Water & Rural Economic Development Committee*)

Friday, Jan 24

- HB **2312** - Involving communities in environmental decision making. (*House Environment Committee*)

Work Sessions

- **Environmental Science Education Curriculum**, briefing on science education outside the classroom. (*House Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee and Appropriations Subcommittee on Education and Education*)
- **Sediment management in agricultural lands.** (*Senate Agriculture, Water & Rural Economic Development Committee*)
- **China's suspension of shellfish imports from Washington state.** (*House Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee*)

New Legislators

Pierce County Council members and Kitsap County commissioners unanimously selected **Jesse Young** of Gig Harbor to fill the vacancy in the 26th Legislative District previously held by **Jan Angel**, who was recently elected to the Senate. Young is a business consultant and will run in November to serve a full two-year term.

The Pierce County Council and Thurston County commissioners selected **Graham Hunt** of Orting to fill the 2nd Legislative District seat formerly held by **Rep. Gary Alexander**. Alexander lost his bid for State Auditor—he had pledged to relinquish his House seat if he lost. Hunt is an Orting City councilman and owns an insurance agency.

Sign-up for Puget Sound Partnership Updates

Remember to check out the latest newsletter from the Partnership highlighting the latest agency news and our partners in action. Newsletter content focuses on the Puget Sound Partnership's role in leading the recovery of Puget Sound. This month features the Partnership's executive director. Read more at <http://us1.campaign-archive1.com/?u=1e527a1c4505cbd9d6662d091&id=f5a6e5c45b>

To receive regular updates you can sign up for our electronic newsletter or regular E-clips news clipping service at http://www.psp.wa.gov/contact_simple.php.